

Ottawa Police and Councilor Information Briefing

Mayor Jim Watson

- Introductory remarks – acknowledges there will be a presser at 4pm
- Protests have been incredibly disruptive – the remaining protestors need to go home OPS
- Our priority is the safety of our residents – I've seen your emails, tweets, messages – what you've been going through is difficult
- Some of you have felt that you have been held hostage, not being able to grocery shop
- Contact hntf@ottawa.ca for assistance, or call 311
- **I've relayed our concerns to the PM on Monday, he has said the RCMP will be there to support us in every way they can**
- **Chief Sloly doing the same and has spoken with RCMP commissioner Lucki**
- **I've also spoken with Mona Fortier to help those who have lost their jobs/ hours for not being able to open their businesses**
- Spoken to Steven Bethalfalvny for provincial supports
- **Spoke to Yasir Naqvi as well, PS to Minister Blair**

Diane Deans – Chief of Police Services Board

- What you've been going through is very difficult
- I've met with colleagues and council members in different areas – hearing of property damage, harassment, sexual harassment, etc.
- I cannot direct police operations, but can get more resources
- I have gotten resources through MOUs to get extra support in to Ottawa from other policing jurisdictions
- Residents can call 211 or 311 to get in touch with the human needs task force
- My expectations for what we need to hear:
 1. What is happening on the ground here today?
 2. How many protestors remain, and how to we restore peace?
 3. We want no more heavy vehicles in our city
 4. When will police enforce our by-laws?
 5. Will Jim Watson call Go Fund Me, and cease and desist order to get them to stop giving these unlawful protestors money
 6. **Pick up the phone and ask the PM to also call Go Fund Me**
 7. **Will there be a federal funding package to help those affected by these group of "mercenaries"**
- I'm sorry for the living hell you are enduring. We expect protests and demonstrations – but not this

Chief Peter Sloly

- Here to provide you the most recent update on operational planning, investigative efforts, overview of situation, plans to address Public Safety issues

- First – to the residents – especially those who live/ work and transit downtown – I’ve spent the last week visiting officers, speaking to residents, business owners, etc.
- This demonstration has been intolerable and unprecedented, with a range of unspeakable, illegal activities s are vast, and have affected the livelihood of the city
- Residents victim of hateful vitriol, noise, harassment – as have businesses
- Officers have been injured, fatigued
- Two seniors approached me yesterday – they thanked me for the work officers have done, implored me to do more, and to safely get convoy out of here
- A couple getting married asked about their safety going home amongst everything – expressed how difficult and nearly impossible the circumstances were
- There is an incredible amount of risk, and work left to be done
- Thank you to our federal, provincial and municipal police partners
- I have 4 messages to deliver:
- **1.** To unlawful demonstrators: there are consequences for your behavior. There will be more arrests made. We will find those who committed criminal acts, and they will face jail if they committed crimes.
- **2.** For those that have contributed to chaos, including those of you who came out of province or country – there will be charges against you, no matter where you’re from. This includes people who desecrated the cenotaph, etc., which is currently under investigation
- **3.** To the people and business owners of Ottawa – we are escalating our enforcement action. We’re doing in a way that will protect public safety
- **4.** Here to provide you with information – operational, security.
- This demonstration is very well funded, but has large public safety risks that affect all of us. It is provincial, national, and increasingly international.
- People have come from all over Canada, and the US, who have been part of the funding, organizing – with plans of more people to show up
- This puts all of us at great risk
- There have been no riots, injuries and deaths to date – but there has been a lot of trauma.
- We are arresting, charging, investigating all bad actors – all options on the table
- All options for a resolution – negotiation to forced resolution – all on the table. But all have risks for rioting, deaths, etc
- We’ve received additional officers and resources from the RCMP, OPP, and across Ontario
- We have federal and provincial emergency managers helping us navigate this as safely as we can
- Monitoring similar demonstrations across Canada, and the world
- **I’ve spoken to Brenda Lucki, regarding Coutts AB**
- **The very first attempt to end that demonstration was unable to do so, created many public safety risks, dangerous collisions, and immediate refilling of spaces that were originally cleared**
- **We face those dangers here – but on a much larger, more complicated scale**
- Deputy Chief Ferguson will lay out the on the ground numbers and response over the past days
- We want to bring the demonstration to a full end – we have very little ability to negotiate with all groups of the protestors, given the variety of organizers, and some of their lack of willingness to leave

- Deputy Chief Bell will describe the arrests that have taken place, investigations ongoing (including at the war memorial)
- There are more reports of criminality that have not come to us – if that has happened to you, report them to our hotlines
- CAO Blair Dunker will outline financial impacts to date
- **All options for resolutions are on the table – we need to keep people safe, and hold people accountable**
- **That said – there may not be a policing solution to this demonstration.**

Deputy Chief Ferguson

- **We've been on this 24/7 since the protests began**
- **8,000-15,000 people during the peak on Saturday afternoon, and thousands of trucks**
- We still have hundreds of trucks in the city – the remaining individuals are highly volatile, highly determined group of unlawful protestors
- We have reopened some key roads and bridges – but many remain obstructed or closed

Deputy Chief Bell

- Update on intelligence and investigative efforts to date, including intelligence over the coming days
- We're working with RCMP and OPP to gather real time information on what's going on
- There are many highly determined people remaining
- During the week, we're seeing efforts to occupy our streets
- We will see increased vehicular traffic this weekend, and decrease again on Monday
- We know others will attend on foot in the parliamentary precinct
- These unlawful demonstrations will again occur right through the weekend
- Everything we do is in the effort to avoid violence and hatred
- Any unlawful activity will not be tolerated
- We've arrested 3 men so far – one with mischief, one with uttering threats, one with having a weapon
- Looking in to incidents at war memorial, and at the Shepherds of Good Hope – investigated by our Hate Crimes unit
- Our intelligence efforts are giving us insights in to the bad actors in our city
- We've put a focus on intelligence gathering, and holding individuals accountable
- We will prosecute anyone involved in criminal activity

Deputy Chief Ferguson

- We're in a period of stabilization
- Officers have put in stricter enforcements outside of the core unlawful protests
- Heavier focus on driving violations are now also being enforced

CAO Blair Dunker

- Costs related to unlawful demonstrations - \$800,000 per day, and these costs are growing
- Over \$3 million to date
- 7/ year average for Canada Day was \$600,000, and Canada 150 was \$1.4 million
- At some point, we will turn to federal and municipal government for supports due to significant budgetary restrictions

Ferguson

- There will be additional demonstrations this weekend – not sure how many people, but will be here
- We will be measured and professional
- We all share the goal of getting through this – let's also please be considerate of our officers as well

Q & A Period

Q: Mayor Watson

- Pass to allow more time for colleagues

Q: Ward 1 Councilor

- People don't feel safe
- What is the plan moving forward, and when will the potential use of force be used moving forward?

A: Chief Sloly

- We are making arrests, laying charges, and that will continue for days, weeks, months and years once this finishes
- All options are on the table – as they always have been
- I urge all residents to report incidents to the police

A: Deputy Bell

- We've received 25 reports of criminal activity to date
- Special investigators working on hate crime
- If you have specific issues to provide to us, we'll make sure to improve reporting streams

Q: Ward 2 Councilor – Dudas

- I know we as politicians that we cannot direct police services
- But we know that this occupation needs to end – the lack of obvious and strong action against these individuals is making them feel like they can do anything
- Much damage already done (financial, emotional)
- When can we expect to get our city back?

A: Chief Sloly

- I share your frustrations
- Let me be clear – these people did not come to seek an audience with any of us.
- They are people from across this country and other countries to show frustration with governments during the pandemic – and pretty much everything they do
- I hold an office that is responsible for providing the best policing – which is exactly what we're trying to do
- We cannot create even more risk in the way we react – we need to act lawfully, safely, and to keep our residents safe
- The longer this goes on – the more risks there will be
- This going on around the country – attempts by other policing groups have tried to clear these people out, with no avail – we need to keep this in mind
- I know people have been victimized, threatened, harassed
- We need to be measured in our approach
- **There may not be a police solution to this demonstration – this is a National issue.**

Q: Councilor McKenney

- There are two lines of confrontation
- 1. The occupation on the Hill
- 2. What's happening in our residential neighbourhoods
- I hear no urgency to what is happening to residents in our neighbourhoods
- It is violent, terrorizing – terrorizing people in their homes
- They've been abandoned during this occupation in our city
- I can respect that what is happening on the Hill is volatile – I'm no expert in policing, crowd control, and respect that I can't provide advice on how to manage that mob
- **But for what is happening south of Wellington – what our residents want to see is the Federal RCMP to take over the full lead on what is happening on Parliament Hill**
- **I beg you to get the RCMP involved – you in your role, Chief Sloly, is to call them in**
- **This is a plea that you recognize as our local police force, that you hand over the lead to the RCMP**
- **Then you can turn your attention, Ottawa Police, to our neighbourhoods**
- **I am writing to the PM, and to Commissioner Lucki and beg them to take over what's going on at the Hill so you can turn your attention to our neighbourhoods**

A: Chief Sloly

- I'm in constant contact with Lucki, including today
- They've provided many resources to us
- However, they are already very overstretched and are not the policing jurisdiction here
- We've invited them, and they are a part of our response in every way – and will continue to do so in every way
- **It's not jurisdictionally possible to transfer this responsibility, as they are not the police of jurisdiction**

A: Deputy Ferguson

- Our very stretched resources are stretched even more
- The NRT teams are out there to address those most impacted by this event
- Our goal is to reduce disorder, and to promote community safety and well being
- We're going to have boots on the ground where you need us, and I'm so sorry for the traumatizing situations you and your residents have been going through

Q: Councillor Fleury – Ward 12

- How come we're not being taken seriously in the impacts we're experiencing
- Public Safety in our neighbourhoods is my number one focus
- Residents are scared to take the bus, those have to leave work, feel hostage in their own homes
- They're scared, the noise is unbearable
- The Rideau Centre being closed until Feb 6th – the impacts are immense
- Do you have enough boots on the ground, and enough resources?

A: Deputy Chief Ferguson

- We will always benefit from more resources and partners

Q: Councillor Minard

- How are you keeping the large trucks from going in to residential neighbourhoods, and preventing them from going in to downtown this weekend?
- Are you giving them fines, is there an injunction coming?

A: Chief Sloly

- Can confirm that we reached out to the city legal services on discussions around seeking an injunction – we would support an injunction from the city

A: Deputy Chief Ferguson

- Traffic for this weekend – we've asked our traffic officers to turn their attention to driving infractions and laying down the rules of the road
- In terms of our ability to limit – we can't prevent trucks going in to certain areas
- We have truck routes but can't shut down streets, and prevent people from travelling through certain areas
- Our traffic folks will continue to enforce noise infractions, etc.

- This needs to be a measured approach – it invokes emotion and anger, that doesn't put any of our members or truckers at risk

Q: Councillor Minard

- Whatever you can do to stop this – there is too much noise.

Q: Councillor Harder

- Often, this council doesn't speak with one voice – but today we do
- Chief – you said that your intelligence tells you that more trucks are coming in to town.
- You saying that leads me to believe that there is no action to stop what's happening now before the weekend – this is very frightening. Why are you not looking at putting barriers up on the 416. 417, highway 7? Why not give out most affected hope that the days of this tyranny put upon them to an end?

A: Chief Sloly

- There is no silver bullet solution
- The lawyers who have advised me that we cannot seal off a city from anyone driving in to the city due to Charter Rights/ Freedom of Movement
- I don't have a lawful authority to do that
- Given how large city is geographically, I would need a group of 50,000 officers to do that if it was lawfully allowed
- However, we closed many bridges to try and slow things down – and allow our ambulances, essential services, and essential workers in and out
- But cannot limit people coming in and out
- People trying to supply their businesses would not be able to if we could do this
- We're working with federal and provincial partners, as well as municipal partners to guide trucks
- We've used snow removal machines, barriers, etc – but there's no way to block every truck

Q: Councillor Fleury

- **Can we use the army? Why are we not contemplating that?**

A: Chief Sloly

- **We're looking at every single option – including military aid to civil power**
- **There are only two occasions when this has happened – Oka crisis, and FLQ crisis**
- **This process is well established**
- **I know exactly how this looked – amazing capabilities, but huge risks to do this**
- **Every option is being looked at – all come with massive risks. That option in particular comes with massive risk**
- **Military members are not police officers – have a completely different training, mindset, and job.**
- **Calling them in may mitigate some risks, but bring in many more.**

Q: Ward 5 Councillor

- What are other costs? Paramedics, by law officers, other city services?
- Also – we used to have a working group with the protestors – we should have people out there to see what is happening on the ground

A: Chief Sloly

- We do have active negotiators, and have additional police liaison officers to support their activities
- **This is a demonstration with many different actors – we have a modicum of cooperation with the original organizers (truckers) – but there are so many others here as well**
- **We have little or no ability to negotiate with individuals walking around/ driving around who have no affiliation with the organizing group – this is a huge challenge**

A: Deputy Chief Ferguson

- Officers working around the clock to work with protestors – but hard to connect with everyone, as there are many other people and actors involved other than the original organizers
- We don't have a total overview of costs over all services

Moderator – Extends Question Period

Q: Councillor Gower

- Is there an indication that firearms have come in?

A: Chief Sloly

- Yes there have been those indications
- A wide variety of weapons have been reported to potentially come in
- Someone from NB tried to come with a firearm, but they were intercepted
- Always a risk of vehicles/ trucks being used as weapons

Q: Councillor Kavanaugh

- For by-law – can we do more ticketing? It's a huge concern
- There have also been reports of fires at Slater – they were told by 911 that “the fire is ok”
- I saw this on social media – not sure if it's true, but there is at least a sentiment out there that these events are being let go

A: Chief Sloly

- We will look in to the recordings of what was said on that call

A: Kim Ayotte (By-Law)

- All activities outside of the redzone are taking place as normal
- There have been 115 tickets in the red zone – mainly people blocking fire hydrants, emergency routes

Q: Councillor Chiarelli

- My constituents feel uncomfortable calling in complaints, especially repeatedly
- What is a hate crime? Can you define it?

A: Chief Sloly

- Hate crimes must be directed towards a group under a group identified under the Ontario Bill of Human Rights
- It can be an act, or an incitement to be an act
- Will put this out on our social media to clarify
- **We're getting a lot of nuisance calls – for example, asking "where is Justin Trudeau"? and "do you think we should be vaccinated?"**

Q: Councillor Keith Fall

- Why did we let the trucks get in to the core?

A: Chief Sloly

- There is no lawful authority for me to do that
- Through negotiation, we tried to find locations for them to park outside out the city
- However, many more trucks came and we couldn't accommodate them/ enforce that
- A lockdown was not a solution to us

Q: Councillor Tierney

- I'm looking at the reluctance of calling this an "occupation" – why aren't we calling this an occupation? They're setting up food stands, etc.

A: Chief Sloly

- There is a demonstration that is ongoing, that is becoming an occupation – it is both
- Truckers have stated they want to stay until they can "talk to the PM" and "until the mandates change"
- There is a demonstration phase that peaks and valleys, and an occupation in others
- We're not in an occupation phase yet
- **I'm less and less convinced of an elegant police solution, and other options that need to be visited, including other statutes and governments**

Q: Councillor King

- Can you give us a timeline on a plan of action, and when that will be communicated to council?

A: Chief Sloly

- We do assessments every day – as the situation continues to change, we have to adjust. Once we have a definitive plan, I will share it – but don't know when/ if that will be

Q: Councillor Leif

- With respect to hotels – have we encouraged hotels not to accommodate these protestors?

A: Chief Sloly

- We're in constant contact with the hotel associations
- They have seen an increase in bookings in the weekend coming up – indicating peaks and valleys of protestors
- They have their own rules on who they can allow to stay or deny
- However, they are engaged on this issue

Q: Councillor Brockington

- Is the Ottawa Police Service responsible for negotiating the end of political protest with the government?

A: Chief Sloly

- Working with municipal, provincial, and federal partners
- The pandemic has created many difficulties – this has brought many people to the capital to express their frustrations, political, around vaccinations, etc.
- Nothing in my job is to end these protests – I am here to protect people
- **Increasingly concerned that there is no policing concern to this**

Q: Councillor Coutieur

- Who are you working with on this>

A: Chief Sloly

- All levels of government, around the country and the world – lots of information sharing

Q: Councillor Kitts

- Are you telling us there is no way, with 250 people downtown right now, you can't get them out of here by this weekend?

A: Chief Sloly

- There is a significant capability using radios to social media to coordinate activities – level of their funding is high, and risky for us to deal with in every aspect
- We've already seen how hard this has been in Coutts – a much smaller and simpler protest

- It's not that simple to remove people

Q: Councillor

- We've heard that police have been told to not enforce the law, so they can de-escalate situations

A: Chief Sloly

- We're investigating, making arrests, pursuing prosecutions
- We may not always be able to act right in the moment – but will always follow-up with investigations
- We need to make an assessment in every case – if an arrest could cause a bigger public safety concern than not making an arrest, we need to make that determination